

**PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

GRANT NUMBER: W-159-HS

SEGMENT NUMBER: 39

GRANT TITLE: Hunter Education Program

AGREEMENT PERIOD: July 1, 2009—June 30, 2011

REPORTING PERIOD: July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

NEED:

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) and the Fish and Game Commission are charged with the preservation, protection, perpetuation, and management of all wildlife in Idaho. They are also charged with the regulation and method of take of huntable species. Safe and responsible hunting is the key to both the mission of the Department as well as the methods whereby people are able to have a safe and enjoyable hunting experience.

OBJECTIVES:

The overall objective of this project is to provide and manage two legislatively mandated programs: basic hunter education and bowhunter education. Both programs will be in accordance with the current Five-Year Plan for Hunter Education in Idaho. The hunter and bowhunter education programs will be made available throughout the state.

State and Regional Hunter Education responsibilities include planning, coordinating and evaluating the regional program and regional needs; and reviewing, modifying, and implementing course curriculums to achieve State hunter education program goals and objectives. Other responsibilities include instructor recruitment and training; evaluating instructor performance; maintaining programs records and documentation; conducting research/surveys to determine future program needs; and providing technical direction to instructors and agency personnel;

Additional regional objectives include: Conducting training for new instructors and in-service training for active instructors; conducting hunting workshops for students and the disabled; and conducting a pilot Trapper Training course.

The basic hunter education and bowhunter education program for the state of Idaho is described in Appendix A.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND BENEFITS:

It is expected by implementing this program that hunting accidents throughout the state will be minimal and coordination between Hunter Education Coordinators (HEC) and instructors will be expanded. Another anticipated benefit will be increased coordination of regional hunter education program needs. Participation in hunting and recreational shooting will contribute to increased hunter recruitment and the enhanced quality of the hunter education program will support an increase in the number of hunters. Improved hunter / landowner relations, which are expected due to teaching respect for private lands, should contribute to more land being opened to hunting.

APPROACH:

1. Volunteer instructors and Hunter Education Technicians (HETs) will conduct hunter and bowhunter education classes in all regions within the state.

Accomplishment: Records entry into the data base for FY10 is currently incomplete (see note on page 6). Records entered thus far indicate that a minimum of 319 hunter education and 75 bowhunter education classes with 5,843 hunter education and 1,077 bowhunter education course graduates were conducted statewide during this agreement period. These totals will increase substantially when all class records for FY10 are entered into the database.

2. HETs will provide comprehensive standardized in-service training to all instructors throughout all regions, statewide.

Accomplishment: All seven Regional Hunter Education Technicians provided coordination, guidance, program support, and formal or informal instructor training for active instructors in their regions. Fifteen in-service training seminars at the regional level were conducted with a total of 170 instructors attending.

3. HETs will provide new instructors with new instructor training and all materials necessary to teach the course and those provided to students.

Accomplishment: Twenty-one new instructor-training workshops were conducted. Training was provided to 129 new hunter and bowhunter education instructor candidates. Some instructor candidates received training on an individual basis. Each received approximately eight hours of training and a copy of all student materials in addition to instructor material and training aids necessary to aid in teaching the courses.

4. HETs will continue to identify and prioritize potential shooting range improvement projects around the state to increase shooting range availability to the Hunter Education Program and 4-H Shooting Programs. The prioritized list will assist in evaluating any future enhancements around the state.

Accomplishment: Shooting range needs information was received from the regional staff and prioritized. Several Shooting Range Development Grant requests for range improvements to ranges which support our hunter education program were submitted to the Department.

5. A Customer Service Representative at the Hunter Education Distribution Center (HEDC) in Boise will distribute hunter education resource materials and support to all instructors statewide as instructors request materials and supplies.

Accomplishment: All hunter education class supplies and resource materials for instructors are distributed from a central distribution center located in Boise by a customer service representative. A toll-free supply request phone line is available to instructors. Class supply

requests are received by a call center operator and relayed to the HEDC. This has proven to be more efficient and reduced errors.

6. HETs will assure that incentive and length of service awards are provided to actively participating instructors. Instructor performance will be recognized at the regional level as Instructor of the Year. An Instructor of the Year will also be selected at the state level.

Accomplishment: Incentive and service awards are available to all active program instructors via an established statewide Volunteer Instructor Recognition Program. The recognition program was completely revised this year to comply with previous audit findings. One outstanding instructor from each region was selected as the Regional Instructor-of-the-Year and one as the State Instructor-of-the-Year. The State Instructor-of-the-Year was also nominated for the national Federal Ammunition / ATK Hunter Education Volunteer Instructor-of-the-Year Award.

7. The Department periodically will send all active instructors newsletters and/or the IDFG News and the *Hunter & Shooting Sports Education Journal*, the official publication of the International Hunter Education Association. Students and instructors will receive the *Hunter's Handbook*, which is published by Focus Group, Inc.

Accomplishment: Several regional newsletters were mailed out in the more populated regions. Four issues of the IHEA *Hunter & Shooting Sports Education Journal* were distributed to all active instructors. A free annual publication, *The Hunter's Handbook*, was distributed to all students and active instructors. Additionally, the IDFG monthly publication, the *Idaho Fish and Game News*, is available to all instructors via the IDFG web site, offices and vendors.

8. HETs will provide advanced youth hunter education with adult mentored youth hunts for both upland game and waterfowl. Youth hunts for various other game will also continue to be provided. Emphasis will be on first-time hunters with controlled supervision by adults.

Accomplishment: Six clinics and workshops were conducted throughout the state. Over 115 youths and adults attended. These clinics and workshops included Women in the Outdoors, shotgun and youth hunting clinics. Twenty-two mentored deer, pheasant, waterfowl, and turkey hunts were held for over 155 youth. Many parents also accompanied their children on the hunts and clinics.

9. The Department will provide two independent study options to the public as an alternative to the traditional Hunter Education Course. One option is a workbook for the "Today's Hunter in Idaho" course and the other is an Internet based online option. Both options require the successful completion of an additional 4-6 hour field day for certification.

Accomplishment: A second Internet course option was introduced in FY10 to provide an additional choice for students learning preferences. Currently two Internet hunter education course options and a Workbook option are available to the public as independent study options. Information on these options is provided on the IDFG website.

10. The Department will offer the public an Internet based independent study option provided by the National Bowhunter Education Foundation (NBEF) as an alternative to the traditional Bowhunter Education Course.

Accomplishment: An Internet based NBEF independent study option is currently available. Information on this option is provided on the IDFG website. The successful completion of an additional 4-6 hour field day is required for certification.

11. The Department will review the Hunter Education Course to eliminate extraneous material, streamline the curriculum and assure the course meets the certification standards recommended by the International Hunter Education Association. The goal is to increase student interest and enrollment by providing a more efficient and attractive course for the public.

Accomplishment: The review of the Hunter Education Course Curriculum was completed in Dec. 2009 and the revised curriculum was implemented in Jan.2010. The modified curriculum shortened classroom time to course essentials which hopefully will appeal to the public and stimulate course attendance. The revised curriculum meets all the IHEA recommended certification standards.

12. The State Hunter Education Program Coordinator (SHEPC) will maintain a comprehensive, hunter education database software program to accurately track hunter education student, instructor and class statistical information.

Accomplishment: A comprehensive database program is continuously maintained to provide accurate and current hunter education student, instructor and class statistical information.

13. The Department will continue to provide an Internet based online class registration process for the public to enroll in hunter and bowhunter education classes.

Accomplishment: An online class registration process is continuously maintained to simplify the class registration process for the public. During the project year 8370 students used the new improved process to register for hunter or bowhunter registration classes.

14. The SHEPC will obtain information from Regional Hunter Education Technicians regarding what they need to enhance the effectiveness of the Hunter Education Program in their regions.

Accomplishment: Input from the Regional Hunter Education Technicians on Hunter Education Program needs was continuously solicited and received throughout the year. Resulting improvements enhanced the program's effectiveness. A second online hunter education course was added which provided students with an additional option to complete online portion of the Internet independent study course.

15. The Department will maintain a separate cost center and coding under the Department's current activity based cost accounting system to track all expenditures from the Section 4 funds.

Accomplishment: A separate cost-center tracking accounting system is being maintained to track all hunter education expenditures.

16. The SHEPC will manage the fiscal aspects of the Hunter Education Program to ensure efficient and proper use of federal funds and resources; and comply with other state & federal rules, regulations, and acts.

Accomplishment: Using a cost center tracking accounting system, we closely monitor expenditures to assure compliance with federal and state requirements.

17. The HETs will conduct instructor in-service training sessions around the state to increase the competency of the volunteer instructors.

Accomplishment: Fifteen in-service training seminars at the regional level were conducted with a total of 134 instructors attending.

18. The SHEPC will review and enhance the hunter education administrative and statistical information management system/process.

Accomplishment: This system and process is reviewed continuously and improved as necessary.

19. All Hunter Education Program staff and volunteer instructors will recruit additional hunter and bowhunter education instructors.

Accomplishment: During the agreement period 111 new hunter education and bowhunter education instructors were recruited

20. The SHEPC will provide the Region 4 Indoor Shooting Range with complete air rifle equipment to enhance the live-fire capability of the Hunter Education Program.

Accomplishment: A complete Crosman Air Rifle indoor target system for 7 shooting lanes including 3 back-up assemblies was installed.

21. The Department will expand the hunter education classroom facilities at the Snake River Regional Office to increase the capacity for hunter education classes.

Accomplishment: The classroom construction was completed on schedule. It has considerably increased our capability to conduct hunter education classes in the region.

22. The Department will provide additional needed furnishings (tables, chairs, DVD players, TV s, projection screens, computer wiring etc.) for hunter education classrooms in IDFG offices.

Accomplishment: Some classroom furnishings including tables, chairs, projectors and screens were purchased. Additional furnishings and equipment will be purchased in FY 11. Computer wiring was installed in the new Region 6 hunter education classroom.

23. The SHEPC will provide hunter and bowhunter instructors with appropriate vests identifying them as program instructors.

Accomplishment: Some product/cost research was done in FY10. We will move forward with this project in FY11.

24. The Department will purchase laptop computers, projectors and additional videos to be used as loaners for hunter education classes conducted by volunteer instructors.

Accomplishment: Eight LCD projectors and a number of videos were purchased in FY10. Additional equipment and videos will be purchased for all regions in FY11.

25. The SHEPC will collaborate with local shooting ranges used in the hunter education program and will provide for range facility improvements as needed.

Accomplishment: Shooting range Development Grants were awarded to three ranges which support the hunter education program. Currently, several additional grant applications are under consideration.

26. The SHEPC will provide a Laser Shot System for each of four IDFG Regions. These systems are a valuable tool when used to promote hunter education at public affairs.

Accomplishment: To date none have been purchased. We will move forward with this project in FY11.

27. The Department will conduct a survey of hunter education program graduates to determine how many graduates actually purchase a hunting license and for other related data. This would assist the Department to better understand the impact of hunter education on license purchases and on hunter recruitment.

Accomplishment: Currently this project is in the conceptual stage and will be pursued in FY11.

28. The SHEPC will purchase 8 Remington IHEA Training Gun Sets for use in IDFG hunter education classrooms.

Accomplishment: Eight of these training gun sets with storage cases were purchased. Each regional training facility now has one of these gun sets.

LOCATION: Statewide, Idaho

COST:

Hunter Education Enhancements and Cost Estimates

1. Employ part-time State Hunter Education Customer Service Rep. to manage the Hunter Education Distribution Center, which provides logistical support to hunter education instructors; a Hunter Education Records Technician; seven Hunter Education Technicians to coordinate the program in the IDFG regions and part-time regional help as necessary. (\$277,065 salary & benefits)
2. Administrative overhead (\$70,642)
3. Hunter education course materials will be purchased and upgraded, as will supplies and other equipment. (\$136,775)
4. Actual financial information for the grant period will be provided on Form SF 424.

In-Kind Match

1. In-kind match is based on volunteer instructor hours expended during the grant period at a rate of \$28.20 per hour. This hourly rate is the average salary and benefits of a Wildlife Educator, who typically performs educational functions very similar to the Hunter Education Program volunteer instructors. The rate was mutually agreed to by the USFWS federal aid coordinator.
2. Using the Department's updated Hunter Education database records application, information from hunter education class record sheets, which contain lead and assistant instructor volunteer hours, is entered into the database. The completed record sheets are signed by the lead instructor. Once all class information is entered, the total number of volunteer instructor hours for a specified time period can be determined by a simple query of the database.
3. All hunter and bowhunter class records for FY 2010 records have not yet been entered into the database. Currently, a total of 9759 volunteer hours are reflected in the database based on actual FY 2010 records entered from 1 July 2009 to date. When all records are entered, it is anticipated that the total volunteer instructor hours for the grant period will exceed the number of volunteer hours needed to meet the match requirement.

PROJECT PERSONNEL:

Headquarters: Victoria Runnoe: Conservation Education Supervisor
Ron Fritz, State Hunter Education Coordinator
Colleen Cade, Hunter Education Records Technician

Glenn Wing: IDFG Hunter Education Distribution Center, Garden City
Pete Gardner, Volunteer / Hunter Education Coordinator, IDFG Panhandle Region
Jen Bruns, Volunteer / Hunter Education Coordinator, IDFG Clearwater Region
Don Sturtevant, Wildlife Educator, IDFG Southwest Region
Clayton Nielson, Volunteer / Hunter Education Coordinator, IDFG Magic Valley Region
Terri Bergmeier, Volunteer / Hunter Education Coordinator, IDFG Southeast Region
James Brower, Volunteer / Hunter Education Coordinator, IDFG Upper Snake Region
Jim Lukens, Regional Supervisor, IDFG Salmon Region

Appendix A

The Basic Hunter Education Program:

1. Student manuals and supplies will be provided to an estimated 9,000 hunter education students.
2. Instructor training materials will be furnished to all current and new hunter education instructors prior to training.
3. All hunter education students will be required to participate in a live-fire practice exercise. Rifles and ammunition will be provided.
4. The minimum length of an International Hunter Education Association (IHEA) approved hunter education class will be 12 hours.
5. Hunter education classes will include, as a minimum, the following subjects:
 - a. Firearm safety
 - b. Landowner/Sportsman relations
 - c. Responsible hunter behavior
 - d. Selection of equipment/preparedness
 - e. Wildlife laws
 - f. Wildlife management
 - g. Wildlife identification
 - h. Field care and transport of game
 - i. First aid and survival skills
 - j. Introductory muzzleloader education (optional)
 - k. Introductory bowhunter education (optional)
 - l. Live-firing exercise
6. Maintain an online Internet based optional hunter education course and a workbook based independent study course.

The Basic Bowhunter Education Program

1. Student manuals and supplies will be provided to an estimated 2,000 bowhunter education students.
2. Instructor training materials will be furnished to all current and new bowhunter education instructors prior to training.
3. The minimum length of an approved International Bowhunter Education Program (IBEP) bowhunter education class will be 8 hours.
4. Bowhunter education classes will include, as a minimum, the following subjects:
 - a. Safety
 - b. Bowhunter responsibilities
 - c. Selection of equipment/preparedness
 - d. Wildlife law and bowhunters
 - e. Wildlife management
 - f. Bowhunting techniques
 - g. Bowhunting practice
 - h. First aid and survival skills
 - i. Shot placement, recovery, and care of game

5. Maintain an online Internet based optional bowhunter education course.

Hunter and Bowhunter Education Program

1. A standardized written final examination is given in both programs.
2. The bowhunter education program final examination was updated and revised in FY07.
3. An optional hunter education workbook based independent study and an online Internet course is available for persons unable to attend the traditional course.
4. An optional online Internet bowhunter education course is available for persons unable to attend the traditional course.
5. Instructors will provide the needed in-kind match at the average hourly rate of \$28.20 per hour. This is the average salary and benefits of a Wildlife Educator, who typically performs educational functions very similar to the Hunter and Bowhunter Education Program volunteer instructors.
6. Seven Regional Hunter Education Technicians coordinate hunter education activities; recruit and train volunteer instructors in their respective local regions.
7. A Hunter Education Distribution Center provides logistical and class material support for volunteer instructors.
8. An administrative clerk maintains hunter education database, class and instructor records.
9. Idaho has over 1000 active hunter and bowhunter education volunteer instructors.